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 FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA  
 TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1434  
 INFO RUEHLR/CONTADORA COLLECTIVE  
 RUFHEB/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 082  
 RUFHOL/AMEMBASSY BONN 439  
 RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 211  
 RUFHLI/AMEMBASSY LISBON 175  
 RUEHLD/AMEMBASSY LONDON 380  
 RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 336  
 RUDKSNQ/AMEMBASSY OSLO 068  
 RUFHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 495  
 RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 590  
 RUDKSA/AMEMBASSY SOFIA 091  
 RUDKFMQ/AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM 125  
 RUDKGPO/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 107  
 RUEHVI/AMEMBASSY VIENNA 116  
 RUFHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 461  
 RUEOEHA/USCINCSO QUARRY HTS PN  
 BT  
 C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 3751

ROME ALSO FOR EMBASSY VATICAN

EO 1)35: DEVL: 7/10/90

TAGS: PGOV SHUM NU

SUBJECT: CHURCH FEARS FURTHER GRN REPRISALS

REF: MANAGUA 3732

1. SUMMARY: FATHER EDDY MONDRAGON OF THE CASA CURAL TOLD POLOFF JULY 10 THAT NINE OF THE TEN EXPELLED PRIESTS HAD LEFT NICARAGUA FOR COSTA RICA JULY 9, WHERE THEY WERE MET BY THE ARCHBISHOP. THE TENTH WAS STILL OT ACCOUNTED FOR, AND PRESUMABLY HAD NOT YETIBEN LOCATED BY IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES. MONDRAGON STATED THE GRN HAD WARNED RADIO CATOLICA IT WOULD BE SHUT DOWN AFTER THE STATION CHOSE TO PLAY RELIGIOUS MUSIC IN SUPPORT OF THE EXPELLED PRIESTS INSTEAD OF SCHEDULED PROGRAMMING. HE ALSO SAID THE CURIA FEARED CHURCH SPOKESMAN BISMARCK CARBALLO WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO RE-ENTER THE COUNTRY. ARCHBISHOP OBANDO Y BRAVO AND OTHER CHURCH OFFICIALS TOLD CODEL NICHOLS THAT A TOTAL OF SIXTEEN PRIESTS AND THREE NUNS HAD BEEN EXPELLED BY THE GRN AS A REYULT OF THE CHURCH'S STAND FOR INDEPENDENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS. ARCHDIOCESAN PRIESTS WILL MEET TODAY AND TOMORROW TO DECIDE ON A RESPONSE TO THE GRN'S ACTIONS.(END SUMMARY.)

2. FATHER EDDY MONDRAGON TOLD POLOFF THAT NINE OF THE TEN PRIESTS HAD BEEN INFORMED JULY 9 BY IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS

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THAT THEIR RESIDENCY HAD BEEN CANCELLED AND HAD BEEN FORCED TO GO DIRECTLY TO THE AIRPORT FOR IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE TO SAN JOSE WITHOUT BEING GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE PERSONAL OR PROFESSIONAL ARRANGEMENTS. THE TENTH PRIEST, TO HIS KNOWLEDGE, HAD NOT YET BEEN LOCATED BY IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES AND WAS STILL IN NICARAGUA. MONDRAGON STATED THAT ONLY SOME OF THE PRIESTS HAD ACTUALLY PARTICIPATED IN THE JULY 9 MARCH IN SUPPORT OF ACCUSED PRIEST FATHER PENA, AND THAT AT LEAST THREE HAD HAD NO CONNECTION WITH THE EVENT. THE PRIESTS CAME FROM VARIOUS PARISHES WITHIN THE ARCHDIOCESE, SOME OF WHICH ARE LOCATED OUTSIDE THE CITY OF MANAGUA. ONE EXPELLED PRIEST, FATHER HUERTAS, WAS THE SECOND PRIEST TO BE EXPELLED FROM THE MONIMBO AREA OF MASAYA.

3. MONDRAGON SAID HE FEARED REPRISALS HAD NOT YET ENDED. HE REPORTED THAT RADIO CATOLICA, IN A GESTURE OF SUPPORT, HAD CHOSEN TO PLAY RELIGIOUS MUSIC INSTEAD OF SCHEDULED PROGRAMMING. THE GRN OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS WAS AT THAT MOMENT WARNING THE STATION THAT IT WOULD BE SHUT DOWN IF IT CONTINUED. THE CURIA HAD ALSO RECEIVED INDICATIONS, HE SAID, THAT CHURCH SPOKESMAN MONSIGNOR BISMARCK CARBALLO, CURRENTLY TRAVELING OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY AND SCHEDULED TO RETURN SOMETIME NEXT WEEK, WOULD NOT BE PERMITTED TO RE-ENTER THE COUNTRY. FATHER PENA'S CASE MIGHT ALSO BE AFFECTED BY THE ACTIONS, AS IT APPEARED HE WOULD BE PROCESSED BEFORE THE ANTI-SOMOCIST POPULAR TRIBUNALS, THE PRIEST STATED.

4. ~~SPEAKING TO CODEL NICHOLS~~, ARCHBISHOP OBANDO Y BRAVO LAMENTED THE RECENT GRN ACTIONS AND DECLARED THE FSLN WANTED TO DELIVER A "MORTAL BLOW" AGAINST THE CHURCH.

ROME ALSO FOR EMBASSY GAT CAN

AUXILIARY BISHOP BOSCO VIVAS ADDED THAT SINCE THE REVOLUTION THE GRN HAD EXPELLED A TOTAL OF SIXTEEN PRIESTS AND THREE NUNS. LITTLE BY LITTLE, HE STATED, GRN ACTS OF CONFRONTATION WERE BECOMING MORE OVERT AND HARSHER, ESPECIALLY IN MANAGUA. HE CITED THE ROSTER OF ACCUSATIONS MADE AGAINST CHURCH LEADERS, INCLUDING CASES OF BISHOPS CHARGED WITH ARMS TRAFFICKING AND THE INCIDENT IN WHICH OBANDO Y BRAVO WAS ACCUSED OF PLANNING AN ANTI-GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATION WHEN OBANDO WAS IN FACT OUT OF THE COUNTRY. MONSIGNOR QUINTANILLO, VICARATE OF CARAZO, ADDED THAT OBANDO'S POSTURE AND THE RESPECT HE EARNED FROM NICARAGUANS ACROSS THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SPECTRUMS THREATENED THE GRN. FOR THAT REASON THEY REACTED SO STRONGLY AGAINST HIM, AND FOR THAT REASON THE CHURCH WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT HIM.

5. VIVAS THEN READ A TELEGRAM OF SUPPORT RECEIVED BY THE CURIA FROM THE VATICAN. PARTIAL PARAPHRASED TEXT FOLLOWS: "... THESE EVENTS ARE EXTREMELY GRAVE AND PAINFUL AS THEY DEPRIVE THE ARCHDIOCESE OF HARDWORKING PRIESTS. THE HOLY SEE NOTES WITH SOME SURPRISE THE RAPID ACTION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF NICARAGUA IN THE SENSE THAT ONLY A FEW HOURS AFTER YESTERDAY'S DEMONSTRATION, AND WITHOUT ADVISING EITHER THE EMBASSIES OR THE BISHOPS, THE GRN HAD ARRESTED AND EXPELLED TEN PRIESTS, WHILE THESE SAME AUTHORITIES DID NOT ACT WITH SUCH RAPIDITY WHEN MANAGUA CHURCHES WERE BEING ATTACKED BY TURBAS."

6. VIVAS TOLD POLOFF AFTERWARDS THAT THE DIOCESAN PRIESTS WERE MEETING JULY 10 TO DECIDE ON A COURSE OF ACTION IN RESPONSE TO THE EXPULSION.

BERGOLD  
END OF MESSAGE

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